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*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:*

**PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION, TRANSPORTATION OFFICIALS EXPLORE  
VAN POOLING AS COMMUTER SERVICE**

LINCOLN – The Nebraska Public Service Commission and public and private transportation officials met Monday in an ongoing series of meetings to explore possible commuter services between Omaha, Lincoln and other nearby communities.

A report by Omaha Metro Area Transit Executive Director, Curt Simon on van pooling was of particular interest. The service, which is provided in other cities, features an 80/20 match of federal and local revenues to purchase vans while commuters pay operating costs.

Simon pointed to a successful program in Des Moines, Iowa, which has a fleet of 79 vans carrying passenger loads of four to 14 plus a designated driver who would also be among the commuters. At this time estimates suggest that fares would be \$64 to \$203 per month, per passenger depending on van size and round trip miles. “This system is operating in cities across the country,” Simon noted.

Second District Public Service Commissioner Anne Boyle said, “Compared to alternatives we have considered, a van pool seems to be the most sensible, economic and cost efficient program to implement.”

Larry Worth, transit manager for the City of Lincoln, which operates the Star Tran bus system, said, “There are several other successful van pool programs throughout the country, including Kansas City, Knoxville and Cleveland, partially funded by Federal Transit Administration and Federal Highway Administration. Other such programs are privately operated, so there are many potential means to implement such transportation programs.”

Another option discussed was federal funding for job access. Chris Stokes of OmaLink, a shuttle and courier service, and Luke Busskohl, sales and marketing manager of Arrow Stage Lines, attended. Both agreed that there could be a public/private partnership serving as operators

or administrators of the program. Stokes said, “The Public Service Commission is really stepping up to meet the needs of the thousands of people who commute daily between Lincoln and Omaha.”

Also attending were Commissioners Jerry Vap, Lowell Johnson and Frank Landis. “All of us agree that there is more information needed; however, we know that if van pooling is successful in other states, it can be successful in Nebraska as well,” said Commissioner Boyle.

All interested commuters may contact the Commission via email at [trans@psc.ne.gov](mailto:trans@psc.ne.gov); or first class mail at NPSC, ATTN: Transportation Department, P. O. Box 94927, Lincoln, NE 68509-4927; or by calling (402) 471-3101 or (800) 526-0017.